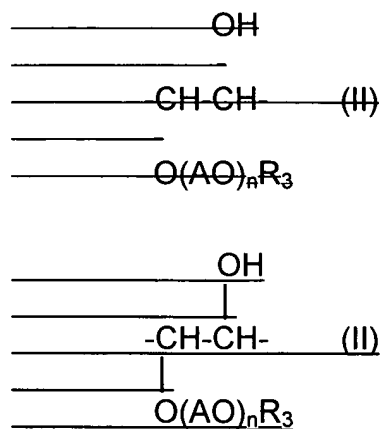


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds of the general formula RY (I), where R is a substituted aliphatic group containing 1-3 structure elements of the formula

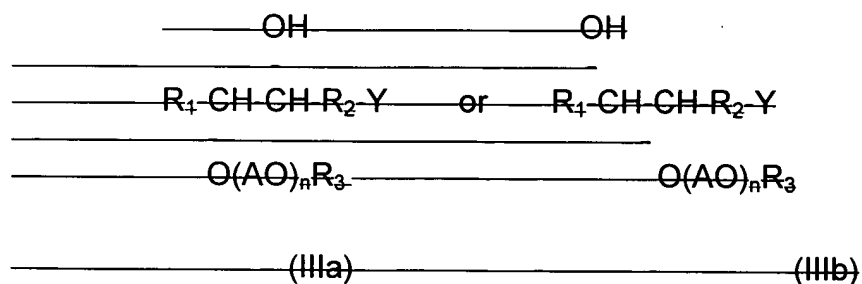


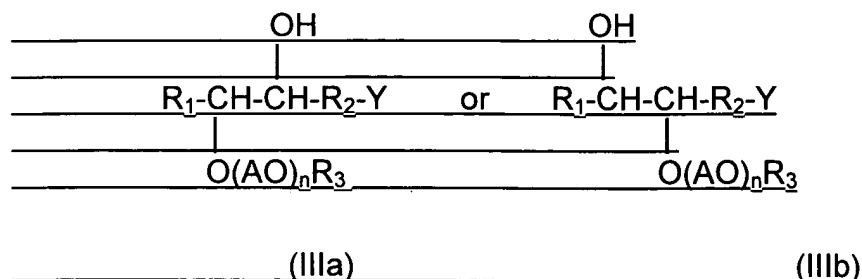
where the carbon atoms shown in the structure element are part of the aliphatic carbon skeleton of group R, which contains 8-24 carbon atoms, and Y is a nitrile group; R<sub>3</sub> is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30.

- 2-10. **Cancelled.**

11. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds of claim 1 containing 1-2 structure elements according to formula (II).

12. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds of the general formulae

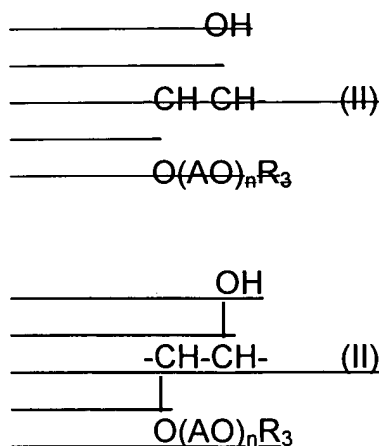




where R<sub>1</sub> is an aliphatic group, R<sub>2</sub> is an aliphatic radical, the sum of carbon atoms contained in R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> is between 9 and 19; Y is a nitrile group; R<sub>3</sub> is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30.

13. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 1 where at least 50% of the AO groups are ethyleneoxy groups.
14. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 11 where at least 50% of the AO groups are ethyleneoxy groups.
15. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 12 where at least 50% of the AO groups are ethyleneoxy groups.
16. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 1 where the AO group is the ethyleneoxy group.
17. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 11 where the AO group is the ethyleneoxy group.
18. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 12 where the AO group is the ethyleneoxy group.

19. **(Previously Presented)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 1 where n is 3-20 and R<sub>3</sub> is methyl or ethyl.
20. **Cancelled.**
21. **Cancelled.**
22. **(Previously Presented)** A method of producing polyoxyalkylene nonionic compounds which comprises
- a) reacting an epoxidised nitrile containing 1-3 epoxy groups and a total of 8 to 24 carbon atoms with an alkyl blocked polyalkylene glycol having the formula R<sub>3</sub>O(AO)<sub>n</sub>H, where R<sub>3</sub> is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30, in the presence of a catalyst, and optionally subjecting the product obtained to alkaline hydrogen peroxide.
23. **Cancelled.**
24. **(Previously Presented)** A surfactant composition which comprises a cleaning effective amount of at least one non-ionic compound of claim 1.
25. **(Previously Presented)** The surfactant composition of claim 24 adapted for the cleaning of hard surfaces, vehicle cleaning, bottle cleaning, machine dishwashing or machine washing of textiles.
26. **(Currently Amended)** A method of producing nonionic compounds of the general formula RY (I), where R is a substituted aliphatic group containing 1-3 structure elements of the formula



where the carbon atoms shown in the structure element are part of the aliphatic carbon skeleton of group R, which contains 8-24 carbon atoms, and Y is a nitrile or an amide group; R<sub>3</sub> is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30, said method comprising:

reacting an epoxidised nitrile containing 1-3 epoxy groups and a total of 8 to 24 carbon atoms with an alkyl blocked polyalkylene glycol having the formula R<sub>3</sub>O(AO)<sub>n</sub>H, where R<sub>3</sub> is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30, in the presence of a catalyst, and optionally subjecting the product obtained to alkaline hydrogen peroxide.

27. **(Previously Presented)** A nonionic compound produced by the method of claim 26.

28. **(Previously Presented)** A surfactant composition which comprises a cleaning effective amount of at least one non-ionic compound of claim 27.

29. **(Previously Presented)** The surfactant composition of claim 28 adapted for the cleaning of hard surfaces, vehicle cleaning, bottle cleaning, machine dishwashing or machine washing of textiles.